



Cover caption: Ulcerative colitis. Coloured scanning electron micrograph (SEM) of freeze-fractured bowel tissue from a patient suffering from ulcerative colitis. The fracture plane has passed through the walls of a tubular gland, leaving the space (lumen) between the walls (lower left to top right) surrounded by a section through these walls. This section shows that the wall comprises columnar absorptive cells that absorb nutrients through the microvilli on their surface. This surface is partly visible in the lumen. The absence of mucus-secreting goblet cells is a characteristic of ulcerative colitis, which is the inflammation and ulceration of the colon and rectum. Magnification unknown. Cover credit: STEVE GSCHMEISSNER / SCIENCE PHOTO LIBRARY.

Journal of the British Society of Gastroenterology

Impact Factor: 9.35

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ISSN: 0017-5749 (print)

ISSN: 1468-3288 (online)

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Gut is published by BMJ Publishing Group Ltd, typeset by TNQ Books & Journals, Chennai, India and printed in the UK on acid-free paper from sustainable forests by Latimer Trend & Co Ltd, Plymouth, UK

Gut (ISSN 0017-5749) is published monthly by BMJ Publishing Group and distributed in the USA by Mercury International Ltd. Periodicals postage paid at Rahway, NJ. POSTMASTER: send address changes to *Gut*, Mercury International Ltd, 365 Blair Road, Avenel, NJ, 07001, USA.

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